

SATURDAY FEB. 1, 1919
C.R.O. BULLETIN

This Week—'Cheerios'—Opium—Bolsheviks!

THE C.R.O. Bulletin

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FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY.

[SATURDAY, FEB. 1, 1919]

EDITORIAL.

There is no doubt about it, this world will soon be too 'hot' to live in—or too dry. State control in the majority of cases may prove a good thing, but State control of a man's common liberty is going a bit too far.

That is what cutting out the drink in any country means. America is now—or will be very shortly—dry. Canada, too, is now practically as bad. I purposely say *bad*, for if they try prohibition in Great Britain I foresee big trouble. Stop the Englishman's beer and he will sit down and do d—— all. You go to a north country "geordie" and say to him, "Geordie, you've got to do without your beer," and see what happens. Having been born among the "geordies" I know. As a workman, the north-country iron worker and miner will stand against the next best, but HE MUST HAVE HIS BEER. That is common legend. The same thing applies to every WORKER in this country, whether he be shipworker on the north-east coast of Scotland, or a "toiler of the deep" on the coast of Cornwall. Beer to these men is the staff of life—bread is only a moderate second.

You might argue—but I don't think you will—that America can do without it, so can we; but I think statistics go to prove that the beer drunk in this country in proportion to the population absolutely puts America in the shade. I am not boasting about it, but am simply dealing with the facts. That is one reason why prohibition will not work here—at least, in my humble opinion, for the *real* manual workers in this country are brought up on beer, and in the majority of cases begin drinking as soon as they are old enough to go and fetch it.

Even Canada's position is different to ours, but whether she will "stick it" or not remains to be seen. After all, if a man wants to have a glass of beer, why shouldn't he? If he can afford it that's his fault. We have been fighting for liberty, and the sooner these "teetotal-meddlesomebodies" realise that we judge our liberty by the amount we get (liberty, not beer), the better. A man cannot help being a teetotalier; if he doesn't want a drink, there's no reason why he should have one, but he must not judge other people's thirsts by his own.

Not only should a man be allowed to



OH. I/C HAREM.

drink; he should be allowed to drink WHAT he likes, whether it be beer, whiskey, milk, lemonade, or *Government* beer, although I hear that the latter is shortly to be included in the list of poisons.

No, dear reader, if you can beat that good old saying—"Whatcher goin' to 'ave?"—well, you are at liberty to have it printed in gold letters and sleep with it under your pillow. Mine's a Scotch.
EDITOR.

CHEVRONS.

We sprang a supplement on our readers last week and we are pleased to state that it was well received, especially by men of the 3rd Canadian Division.

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Lieut. Candy has received a letter from Gen. Sir Arthur Currie, in which he states that the Editor's request for a message from him for our Souvenir Number did not reach him. By the tone of Sir Arthur's letter we feel sure that he would have replied had he received our letter, which for some unaccountable reason went astray.

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Photographs of the group of statutory entitled "Canada's Golgotha," by Capt. F. Derwent Wood, A.R.A., which is to find a permanent home in the Canadian War Memorial, Ottawa, may be obtained by giving names in to Pte. McCoskery, R.2.A.2, who will be pleased to show specimen copy. Price 3s. 6d. each. Size 10 in. x 6 in.

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The copyright of this photograph being vested in the artist, these copies have only been secured by the special favour of Capt. Derwent Wood to the C.R.O., and then only on the understanding that they must not be reproduced in the press.

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Back numbers of the *Bulletin* can still be obtained, and it is possible that we may be able to get together one or two complete sets for those of our readers who would care to have them.

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Items of interest to the personnel of the Office will be welcomed by the Editor.

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Another one of our old friends has left us for Canada; this is S./Sgt. C. Rouse, better known as "Charlie" Rouse. Charlie was one of the best liked "Casualty men" in the Office, and his genial personality will be missed by all—especially R.2.A. Cent. Section, which was his "Dug-out"

THINGS WE WANT TO KNOW ?

Are the ladies in the Stenographers' Pool jealous of the "crèche" in R.I.B. in so far as their looks are concerned?

(Now we're asking for trouble!—Ed.)

Who was the lady from this Office who sat in the Theatre recently with an "Engaged" label stuck on her back?

And is this the *third* time to our knowledge that this lady has been engaged?

And, furthermore, *has it got anything to do with us?*

When is R.I.B. going to start morning prayers for the benefit of their latest increase in strength?

And would it not be a good idea to have a revolving mirror in centre of "the babes' table"?

If Captain Stewart heard the little boy the other day, who, passing him in the street, said: "I've seen him on the pictures"?

If the Paymaster really enjoys the "Civilian Pay Parade," and would it not be a good idea for the ladies to form a "jazz band" to amuse him until the parade is over? It would make his cold job much warmer.

What Lieut. Candy's costume is to be at the Fancy Dress Dance?

And did he think of going as a "Will o' the Wisp"?

Is the "Canadian Daily Record" published for "all ranks"?

And does this query also apply to the "Beaver"?

May the female staff smoke at smoking time?

And if so, will it be a case of "smoke and powder"?

What is the price of admission to "Bender's Babies" at the "R.I.B."?

Are posts in "W.S.M." Branch hereditary?

If the "Section Dinner" idea has not caught on?

What the casualty—"Broken Glasses," appearing on a casualty card, meant? Eye—or whiskey?

If the "Lady in Green" (late "Lady in Blue") likes being "shushed"?

Have all the married men told their wives about the increased subsistence allowance?

What Sgt. Cutler called the person who propped the door open with the fire bucket, and did he really enjoy forming one of the "mopping up party"?

If it is true that the B.C. boys have made up their minds to prohibit prohibition on their return to that province?

If there is any truth in the rumour to the effect that Pte. C. W. Beach (Pt. 2.0 Depot) is contemplating matrimony?

And is the widow sufficiently interested?

If a certain popular Scots S.Q.M.S. has lately been heard to remark: "Oh, we will have a night to-night, to-night"?

Finally: WHO DOES THE BASSINETTEE IN THE BASEMENT BELONG TO?

MEN OF THE EMPIRE L.O.L. 880 (CANADIAN).

The above Lodge held a banquet on Saturday, the 18th January, at the Trocadero Restaurant, 60 of the brethren being present. The guests of the evening were Rgt. Wor. Bro. Louis A. Ewart, Grand Secretary England, Rgt. Wor. Bro. Robson, Grand Chaplain of the Grand Black Chapter, Queensland, Australia, Rgt. Wor. Bro. David Catt, D.G.M., and Prov. G.M. Metropolitan Province, London.

Letters of apology for being unable to be present were read from the Most Wor. Grand Master, England, Col. Sir James Craig, Bart., M.P., and Bro. Sir Edward A. Kemp.

The Grand Master had accepted our invitation to be present, but owing to his having been given a seat in the new Ministry had to proceed to Ulster, he having to seek re-election upon his accepting same.

Very commendable speeches were given by the Grand Secretary, Wor. Bro. Ewart, Wor. Bro. Robson, G.B.C., Wor. Bro. David Catt, and the Wor. Master and his officers.

G.S., in his address, spoke of the splendid achievements of 880, since opening, and said the Lodge would always have an honoured memory in England, especially by them who had been with us at some of our meetings, and this evening would never be forgotten by any who had had the privilege to be present.

In his concluding remarks, he thanked the Master and officers for all they had done, and wished them God's speed, and they would soon be back with their loved ones in Canada.

Rgt. Wor. Bro. Robson was listened to with great attention. He congratulated the Lodge and spoke of the working of the Order in Australia.

The Pro. G.M. Wor. Bro. Catt said as he had been with us at most of our meetings and we all knew him well, he would not take up any more time, but would sit down so as the other speakers would get a chance.

The Wor. Master, Bro. Bettens, in a very racy speech, gave an account of the Lodge from the formation in December, 1916, to the present day, and mentioned the fact that we have now 139 members.

He thanked the Officers for the cordial support they had given him in the past, and hoped they would continue to do so in the future.

Bro. Bender, D.M., Bro. Phillips, Chaplain, Bro. Inglis, Treas., Bro. Correll, Secretary, Bro. Foster, Asst. Sec., responded to the toast of the Officers; and Bros. Scott, Hough, and Brownlee for the committee.

Music was rendered during the evening by Bros. Parker and Hunt and Cpl. Cranston, and Sgt. Roberts, of the Canadian Military Choir.

At 10.55, owing to the lighting restrictions, a very enjoyable evening had to be brought to a close.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

DANCE NOTES.

Expenses on last Dance were £23 1s. Cash in hand, £12.

All receipts can be seen by applying to Sgt. Jackson, R.2.B.5., who will be pleased to give any information concerning all dances.

Order your tickets early for the forthcoming dance.

If there is anyone in the Office who wishes to donate a special prize, it will be most welcome.

Subscriptions towards prizes will also be welcomed by the Committee.

PRIZES.

(1). 4 Prizes. Best Ladies' Original. Best Gents' Original.

(2). 3 Prizes. Comic Ladies' and Gents'.

(3). 2 Prizes. Best Pair, Ladies or Gents.

(4). Section Prize. Best four men from any Section. (Entries in this Section are not eligible for No. 1.)

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(To the Editor.)

So many have asked me if they can bring their wives and friends to our dances without fear of seeing any unruly conduct that I would like to let them know through your columns that the Committee have given me full power to order any person to leave who is inclined to behave in any way objectionable to the rest of the company.

We have always endeavoured to run these dances on as select lines as possible, and it is our firm intention to continue to do so. The receipts shown are ample proof of the popularity of these dances.

I trust that these few lines will cast away any doubt that might exist on the question of intending dancers bringing their friends.

Thanking you, etc,

SGT. G. JACKSON.

THIRD ANNUAL BANQUET. Masonic Brethren C.R.O.

The 3rd Annual Banquet of the Masonic Brethren, C.R.O., was held on Monday, 27th inst., at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, E.C.

The company numbered 74, including 8 guests from the Polytechnic Lodge. Bro. White (our M.O.) was in the chair, and letters were received from Bros. Lt.-Gen. Sir Richard E. W. Turner, V.C., and Maj.-Gen. Griesbach, expressing regret that they were unable to be present.

Among those who contributed to an excellent programme of entertainment were Bros. Nicholls, Gardiner, Henderso Bond and Cronin (of the Polytechnic Lodge), who rendered an admirable performance on the fourth degree.

W. Bro. Burgess responded to the toast, "The Polytechnic Lodge," in a very able manner. Various other speeches were made, and the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and the National Anthem terminated a most enjoyable evening.

MY VISIT TO AN OPIUM DEN.

BY TOBA.

Boys, I believe I've been in an opium den. Yes, and not more than 200 yards from this Office, either! 'Twas on a bittering cold and wet evening one night last week, when I left this Office at the usual time—5.30—in company with one of our gallant S.Q.M.S.'s, a man whom you might have expected would know better than entice a man of my moral character into so vile a place. On leaving the Office he said to me: "Let's go and have some tea. I know of a good place." I consented to go with him, feeling rather chilled, and not a little glad at the prospect of getting out of the drizzle.

"We'll board a 'bus," said he; and before I knew what had happened we had not only boarded the 'bus, but had done our journey, paid our fare, and were jumping off, having travelled only a little over a hundred yards.

We had travelled east—that much I knew; but why take a 'bus for so short a journey when we could have walked it in three minutes? My suspicions were aroused for the first time. There was something more than tea in this! "Where the —— are we going?" I asked. "Down here," he said; and whisked me through a dimly lighted doorway on the right of the road, and DOWN SOME STEPS! I had not been used to going down steps to have my tea, and there was something uncanny about it. I felt a real villain. Anyway, I thought, I'll see this accursed affair through now, even at the risk of being late at the Office in the morning. But shall I ever forget my feelings when, on reaching the bottom of the stairs, my keen sense of smell at once detected something—something which the papers of two hemispheres have had their columns full of; something we have been reading about night and day; people have been dying with it, others dying without it; others have been locked up through it; and it was this latter thought that frightened me. I had got the wind up! IT WAS OPIUM!

Oh! that I should have ever have come here to tea. If mother knew I was here she would never look at me again! I little thought as I had been reading the papers lately, and decrying the use of opium, that I, above all persons, would find myself in an opium den.

It was too late now to turn back: I must face it; and I ventured beyond the oriental screen at the foot of the stairs. The carpet was lovely and soft to tread on. I felt like a horse walking on silk, and the ceiling was low, oak beams ran across it, and from these oak beams hung electric lights, shaded with oriental shades of the real Chinese pattern. The curtains, the little bamboo tables, the wallpaper—everything, in fact, told me I had struck a real opium den. And so near our civilised Office in the Old Bailey! But to go back to the den—the den with the low, long, soft velvety seats, and the low, soft, easy chairs; which sunk right down as you sat in them. They were lovely; everything was lovely, but—what a lot of

screens about! These were all over, but they did not seem out of place with the surroundings, as I soon found out. The room is not an extremely large one, but what one would term as "just nice," heated by a gas fire at the top of the room, which gave out a warm glow and light that blended beautifully with the dull yellow glow from the electric lights, shaded, as I have said, by the Chinese shades. But where was everybody? The place seemed empty. "Come on," says my S.Q.M.S., "let's sit down." We did, and presently I saw a thin stream of smoke going up behind one of those screens. Ah! opium, I thought. I've heard they smoke it, and that's the smoke? My gaze was fixed on this thin uncanny stream of smoke coming up behind a screen; there was something fascinating about it, and there was not a murmur behind that screen, either. How many people were there? I wondered. And were they in a trance, or dying, or what? I was tempted to go and peep, and in a few seconds I had picked up enough courage to pull myself up out of the soft chair. I gripped my S.Q.M.S.'s hand. "Shush," I said, "I'm going to look," and to my surprise he did not hold me back. I stole over the soft carpet, and, reaching the screen—PEEPED! Behold! a beautiful vision of a female, mixed up with a quite ordinary looking man! Tea laid for two! And they were smoking—CIGARETTE! Ah! I thought, this is only camouflage: they heard me coming and hid their opium pipes before I got there. They don't get over me that way. I crept back to where I had come from, and found my S.Q.M.S. was doing exactly the same thing as the two I had just left! He, too, was smoking a cigarette. Ah! I've got it; they were all smoking OPIUM CIGARETTES! But I was still puzzled, for he, too, had a female form at the side of him, and we never brought one in with us, I'll swear.

I sat down beside my pal, wondering if he would continue to be a pal to me after the opium had done its deadly work. I looked at him: his eyes were glassy, his face appeared to be a yellowish green—he looked awful. And the female beside him had her long white arms around his neck, stroking his face, kissing him, as though they had known one another for—well, for at least a day. What would be my fate? I had another good look round the room, and I could surely make out horrible shapes, weird forms, and other things huddled up amongst the many cushions. Yes, I had forgotten to mention the cushions. But it was hard at times to distinguish the cushions from the male and female forms that reposed thereon. I sat for a few seconds, fascinated by the two huddled creatures, and by the weird silence of it all, when I suddenly became aware of the presence of a female form divine at the side of ME! "Tea and toast, please," I muttered. "And, of course, I can have some with you?" she said; and before I had time to even agree to this proposal, she had

slid away and returned again with the tea and toast. The tea and toast were warm, and so was the atmosphere, and even I was not feeling uncomfortably cold. I had now and again caught sniffs of my friend's cigarette, and I knew that it was gradually taking effect on me. It was doing its deadly work. "Have a cigarette?" said my female form divine. Ah! I thought, at last my time has come; the vice is to be MINE. My gad, if my wife only knew. It was irresistible, and with trembling fingers I took a cigarette, placed it to my mouth, my female form held a lighted match to it, and I puffed, and again I puffed. What joy, what ecstasy, was this! All the world was mine, and yet I felt weak—weak as a mouse.

But what was this? I gradually became conscious of a beautiful, soft, white arm around my neck, and a velvet-like cheek and ruby lips touching my face. Oh joy! I'm in fairyland! Harems are dull compared with this place! I managed to turn my head and ventured to touch my female. I touched her neck, and it felt wonderful; her skin was like that of a peach, only softer. She was holding something in her beautiful white hands—something soft and silky. "What is that?" I ventured. "Oh! I am making some 'combs,'" she answered. Combs—combs; I knew the name. I had heard the wife speak of combs. "Say," she said, "I want some lace for these; it will cost four shillings; match your friend who pays for it!" Match my friend who pays for it!—and only last week I had refused to buy the wife two yards of baby ribbon! But then I mustn't think of those things here. I matched my friend: bang went my four bob. Yes, the opium was doing its work. We settled down again. The tea went cold, but what matter: we were angels of love—she and I. I looked up to see how my friend was getting on, but he and his lady were not to be seen. They were surrounded by one of those screens, and so were WE. We were camouflaged.

(To be continued Next week.)

(Continued from Page 4.)

at Whitehall of AN EXISTING GRIEVANCE When a soldier knows that things are being done in the best possible way in his interest, HE IS THE LAST TO KICK soldiers in British uniforms breaking camp and commandeering lorries, etc., seemed to savour of Bolshevism; at the same time, NOTHING WAS FURTHER FROM THE MINDS OF THESE MEN, WHO, HAVING A GRIEVANCE, took things into their own hands temporarily."

Is THIS clear enough? Another thing, "Bolchey," in any further correspondence on this matter, you will have to cut out the *nom de plume*. It is a well-known "press law" that all published correspondence in which the management of the paper, the Editor, staff, or matter appearing in that paper are criticised, should be published under the writer's correct name. Otherwise the writer has the advantage right through.

EDITOR.

Correspondence.

The "Bulletin" does not necessarily associate itself with the views expressed by our correspondents.

(To the Editor.)

I was intensely interested in reading the three letters in this week's issue of the *Bulletin*, which presumably were meant to be replies to the gentle letter written by "A Lady Member" of the Pierrot Troupe.

I will take the first written by Whitwell H. Ranson. This gentleman did not attend the first meeting, and when approached about joining the Troupe replied that he was very busy, as he contemplated matrimony, and could not spare the time. I quite agree with him that the matter of the Troupe was treated in far too hole and corner fashion, but as he refused to have anything to do with it, I don't think he is qualified to speak.

The second letter is from S.Q.M.S. Sealy, who attended the first meeting, and also I believe one, if not two, rehearsals. He was elected on the Committee, but I think he will agree with me in saying that at the Rehearsals it was very difficult to get male voices; in fact, I think there was only one other candidate besides those chosen. The female element was in great strength, but for a Pierrot show I think the best were chosen. Several ladies who were present had very good concert platform voices, which are not needed in a Pierrot Troupe, but lacked those little points which are essential for the latter.

As regards the expenses, S.Q.M.S. Lunn handed in a statement to the Adjutant, who, if he sees fit, will publish it in the *Bulletin*. Many of the Office were sceptical about attending the performance at the Y.M.C.A., but judging by the remarks which were passed on it from the Officer i/c Records downwards, it was an unqualified success.

I was asked at the first rehearsal to take the Troupe in hand, but owing to circumstances over which I had no control I was unable to do so. Mr. G. F. Low was then approached, but his time was so filled up that he found he could not do himself justice, so he, too, resigned. As things were getting from bad to worse Lunn, Hunt and Harris, with Mrs. Payne, Miss Parrick, and Miss Vander Meerschen very pluckily decided to try and carry on. They held numerous rehearsals at each other's homes, and the result was an excellent show given at the Y.M.C.A. Central Hall in November. Special thanks are due to Cpl. Cranston for kindly taking Miss Parrick's place at the last moment, as he had previously resigned from the Troupe. Cranston's letter is a very fair one, but I would like to tell him that the Office i/c Records told the Adjutant that every facility was to be given to the members of the Troupe to get away, but owing to demobilisation matters, this was not always possible, and when S.Q.M.S. Lunn was sent to Rhyl and the Dispatching Section were working

night and day, it was thought best that the Troupe should close, so the Adjutant wrote to the eight hospitals in which performances had been promised, regretting that the Troupe would be unable to fulfil engagements.

Before I close I should like to thank one and all of the Troupe who tried to carry on under great difficulties, and would ask your readers to remember that this is a Military Office, and not a big Departmental Store.

L. E. CANDY.
Lieut.

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(To the Editor.)

I must have misled several of your readers by my letter in last week's *Bulletin*.

Regarding "expenses," all information can be had from the Treasurer. As the writers say, the first meeting went very well; but as many were against a "Concert Party" a Pierrot Troupe was decided on: it was learnt that only a few members were required, so that we had to dispense with many willing artists. "The Lady" was appointed as a member of the *Music Committee* only!

Since one writer wishes me to be candid I will be so. I did not insinuate that because one member had left we could not carry on. There is plenty of talent in the Office and the party need not want for suitable artists.

The Troupe has only been supported by Lieut. Candy, and after his good and willing work I am sorry it has had to close down.

After the concert at the Y.M.C.A., Officer i/c Records sent word that we could get the necessary time off for the concerts at the hospitals, but when on Dec. 30th we had a concert at Tooting, and required the boys to leave at 4.30, they were not granted the time, so the concert had to be cancelled at an hour's notice (which must have inconvenienced the hospital). So with a view to the likelihood of a recurrence of this it was best to cancel all future engagements.

ELLA VANDER MEERSCHEN.
("A Lady Member").
R.2.A.4.

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(To the Editor.)

I have always contended that to combat a lady journalist was taking an unfair advantage, but the letter signed "A Lady Member," written in reference to the C.R.O. Concert Party, calls for a reply.

During the winter of 1917, the former Concert Party held a very successful season, giving many concerts to Hospitals in and around London, besides handing over £15 to the Canadian Red Cross Society and a considerable sum to the more or less successful sports which were conducted by the Office Athletic Association.

It was considered that the summer months did not afford the best time for holding indoor concerts, and so the Party adjourned its efforts till the fall of last year.

When the recommencement of activities were mooted and a meeting called, I believe that some sixteen members of the military and civilian staffs attended for

the purpose of reorganisation, such number not including at least two of the seven persons who conducted the concert held at the Central Y.M.C.A. in November last.

Eventually, after considerable rehearsing, the concert was held, and was, both professionally and financially, a success. Although a financial statement has not been issued, the receipts must have been high, and therefore much money must have been available for the very excellent purpose for which the concert was ostensibly held, the entertaining of Wounded Soldiers.

However, after a visit by a portion of the Party to one Hospital, this cyclonic Concert Party ceased to exist.

I cannot believe that "A Lady Member" would really have us think that its demise was due to one of its members leaving the Office. One man shows have, like post boys and dead donkeys, long been relegated to the past with which alone they have anything in common.

Moreover, when a visit to a second Hospital was at hand, I was asked if I would assist the Party, and consented to do so, only to discover that when the program was completed, the name of the Hospital at which we were to perform had been inadvertently mislaid.

There are many able artistes in the Office who would willingly do their bit in the very laudable work of entertaining the Wounded Boys, and the arrangement of a program cannot seriously be considered as the reason for not fulfilling a contract that the C.R.O. Concert Party should have been in honor bound to carry out.

I may refer later to the financial aspect of the situation.

Thanking you for your space, I am,
Yours, etc.,

(Cpl.) EDWARD S. MARTIN,
R.1. "C."

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(To the Editor.)

Re Editorial article in *Bulletin*. It reads as if the Editor was surprised that there was any reason for soldiers to "grouse."

There is every justification for growling. We are in a position of seeing men, whose service of months can be counted on your fingers, being discharged, while men of four and a half years' service and others who are close up to them are being retained.

If you dare voice your opinions of unfair play you are a student of "Boloism" or a Bolshevick.

It is an injustice to men who first answered the call to be treated as mere pawns. They should be given the option of "staying on" if they so desire.

ONE OF THE "BOLSHEVICS"

Dear "Bolchey,"—

I am afraid there is not much substance in your remarks. Kindly read "Editorial" again, paying special attention to the following extracts from same:—"Intrinsically the recent processions and meetings held as a protest against the slow methods of demobilisation were of interest to the extent that they reminded the people

(Continued on page 3, column 3.)